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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to recognize John Chester of Chicago on
4 the occasion of his retirement; and

5 WHEREAS, John Chester has been a key player in the
6 political and organizational development of Chicago's gay and
7 lesbian community for almost 30 years; a native of Detroit, he
8 is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame and a
9 telecommunications specialist by profession; and

10 WHEREAS, Chester's first Chicago involvement was with the
11 Uptown Center of Hull House; it was there that he learned how
12 to adapt his considerable administrative skills and
13 organizational abilities to best advantage within a not for
14 profit business environment; he chaired the Uptown Housing
15 Committee, working to combat redlining and develop decent low
16 income housing along the lakefront; as an offshoot of this and
17 to help the working poor to establish credit, Chester founded
18 and served as the president of the Northside Community Federal
19 Credit Union; and

20 WHEREAS, Chester was a founding board member of the
21 Crossroads Fund, also serving thereon as a gay/lesbian
22 community representative; he later served as a board member and
23 vice president of Dignity/Chicago during the period in which
24 the organization opened a permanent office; as a board member
25 and president of the Rodde Fund, he prompted the development of
26 the group's organizational infrastructure; he also served as a
27 board member and chair of Chicago House at a pivotal time in
28 this highly respected AIDS housing provider's organizational
29 evolution; and

30 WHEREAS, His first love, however, has always been politics;
31 in 1971, Chester joined Illinois Gays for Legislative Action to

1 work on an early version of what would later become Chicago's
2 human rights ordinance; in 1973, he was a founding member of
3 the Gay Rights Task Force of the Alliance To End Repression,
4 which became the Illinois Gay Rights (now Gay and Lesbian) Task
5 Force; in 1977, he became co-chairperson of the IGRTF's State
6 bill project, remaining actively involved until 1983; during
7 the early 1980s, Chester was the president of OPEN
8 (Organization Promoting Equality Now), Chicago's first gay and
9 lesbian political action committee; he is currently the
10 president of the Illinois Federation for Human Rights Political
11 Action Committee, and he serves on the boards of directors of
12 Personal PAC, which supports "pro choice" candidates for
13 office, and Illinois Public Action, which promotes utility and
14 health care reform; and

15 WHEREAS, In addition, Chester has been highly visible in
16 his support of and work for many individual candidates for
17 public office; therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
19 NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
20 congratulate John Chester on his well deserved retirement and
21 wish him good health and happiness in all his future endeavors;
22 and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
24 presented to John Chester as a token of our respect and esteem.